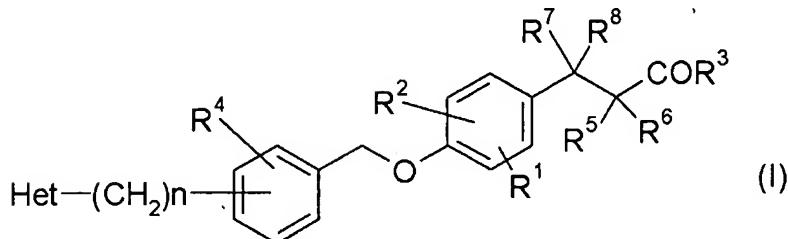


Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A compound represented by the formula:



wherein Het is an optionally substituted heterocyclic group,

N-n is 0 or 1,

R¹ and R² are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a C₁₋₆ alkyl group or a halogen atom,

R³ is an optionally substituted hydroxy group or an optionally substituted amino group,

R⁴ is a hydrogen atom, ~~an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted C₁₋₆ alkyl group, an optionally substituted C₂₋₆ alkenyl group, an optionally substituted C₂₋₆ alkynyl group, an optionally substituted C₃₋₈ cycloalkyl group, an optionally substituted C₆₋₁₄ aryl group, an optionally substituted C₇₋₁₆ aralkyl group,~~ an optionally substituted hydroxy group or an optionally substituted amino group,

R⁵ and R⁶ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a C₁₋₆ alkyl group or a halogen atom, and

R⁷ and R⁸ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a C₁₋₆ alkyl group, a halogen atom or an optionally substituted hydroxy group,

or a salt thereof (except

4-[[3-(2-pyrazinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyrazinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

methyl 4-[[3-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

4-[[3-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

4-[[3-(2-thiazolyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

methyl 4-[[3-(2-thiazolyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

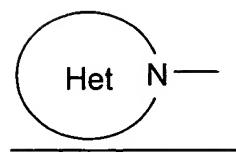
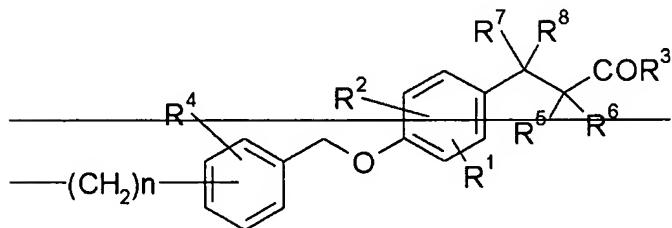
4-[[3-(1H-pyrrol-1-yl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

methyl 4-[[3-(1H-pyrrol-1-yl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

4-[[3-(3-furyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
methyl 4-[[3-(3-furyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
4-[[3-(5-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
4-[[3-(2-pyridinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyridinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
4-[[3-(2-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
methyl 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid and
methyl 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate).

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently amended) A compound of claim 1, wherein ~~the heterocyclic group represented by Het is a heterocyclic group containing at least one nitrogen atom as a ring constituting atom and the nitrogen atom is bonded to a group represented by the following formula:~~



wherein each symbol Het is as defined in claim 1, which is optionally substituted.

4. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R³ is a hydroxy group.

5. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein n is 1.

6. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R¹ and R² are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom.

7. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R⁴ is a hydrogen atom or a C₁₋₆ alkoxy group.

8. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R⁵ and R⁶ are hydrogen atoms.

9. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R⁷ and R⁸ are hydrogen atoms.

10. (Original) A compound of claim 1, which is 3-(4-{[3-(1-benzothiophen-3-yl)benzyl]oxy}phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-(4-{[3-(2-methyl-3,4-dihydroquinolin-1(2H)-yl)benzyl]oxy}phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-[4-({4-[(2-phenyl-1H-indol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-[2-fluoro-4-({4-[(2-phenyl-1H-indol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-[4-({4-[(2,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrrol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-(4-{[4-({5-(2-phenylethyl)-3-[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl}methyl)benzyl]oxy}phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-[4-({4-[(3,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-{4-[(4-{[3-tert-butyl-5-(phenoxy)methyl]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl}methyl)benzyl]oxy}-2-fluorophenyl]propanoic acid;

3-{4-[(4-{[5-(benzyloxy)-3-tert-butyl-1H-pyrazol-1-yl]methyl}benzyl)oxy]-2-fluorophenyl}propanoic acid;

3-(4-{[4-{[3-tert-butyl-5-[(6-methylpyridin-2-yl)methoxy]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl}methyl]benzyl]oxy}-2-fluorophenyl)propanoic acid or a salt thereof.

11. (Currently amended) A GPR40 receptor function modulator comprising a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical agent comprising a compound of claim 1-~~or a prodrug thereof together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.~~

14-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently amended) A method of modulating a GPR40 receptor function in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1-~~or a prodrug thereof~~ to the mammal.

19. (Currently amended) A method of promoting insulin secretion in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1-~~or a prodrug thereof~~ to the mammal.

20. (Currently amended) A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of diabetes in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1-~~or a prodrug thereof~~ to the mammal.